

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND

Sign Ordinance Revisions

2012 Legislative Session

Legislative Day #

BILL NO. 2012-07

Introduced by: Charles County Commissioners Sign Task Force

Date Introduced: 4/10 / 2012

Public Hearing: 5 / 1 / 2012

Commissioners Action: 5 / 1 / 2012

Commissioner Votes: CQK: Y, RC: Y, KR: Y, DD: Y, BR: Y

Pass/Fail: Pass

Effective Date: 5 / 11 / 2012 12:01 a.m.

Remarks: _____

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND

2012 Legislative Session

Bill No. 2012-07

Chapter. No. 297

Introduced by Charles County Commissioners Sign Task Force

Date of Introduction 4/10/12

BILL

1 AN ACT concerning:

2 Sign regulations

3
4 FOR the purpose of:

5 Correcting and updating sign regulations

6
7 By adding:

8
9 Chapter 297- Zoning Ordinance

10 Article III, § 297-49. Word usage; definitions.

11 *Code of Charles County, Maryland*

12 *(June, 2006)*

13
14 Chapter 297- Zoning Ordinance

15 Appendix K Ag Tourism Sign Program

16 *Code of Charles County, Maryland*

17 *(June, 2006)*

18
19 By amending:

1 Chapter 297- Zoning Ordinance
2 Article XIX, § 297-321(A). Prohibited signs.
3 *Code of Charles County, Maryland*
4 *(June, 2006)*
5
6 Chapter 297- Zoning Ordinance
7 Article XIX, § 297-322. Signs requiring permit but no fee.
8 *Code of Charles County, Maryland*
9 *(June, 2006)*
10
11 Chapter 297- Zoning Ordinance
12 Article XIX, Figure XIX-1 Maximum Sign Size and Heights by Road Classification
13 *Code of Charles County, Maryland*
14 *(June, 2006)*
15
16 Chapter 297- Zoning Ordinance
17 Article XIX, § 297-325. Event signs.
18 *Code of Charles County, Maryland*
19 *(June, 2006)*
20
21 Chapter 297- Zoning Ordinance
22 Article XIX, § 297-326(A). Maintenance of signs and permits.
23 *Code of Charles County, Maryland*
24 *(June, 2006)*
25
26 BY repealing and enacting with amendments:
27
28 Chapter 297- Zoning Ordinance
29 Article XIX, § 297-320. Signs requiring neither permit nor payment of a fee.
30 *Code of Charles County, Maryland*
31 *(June, 2006)*

1 Chapter 297- Zoning Ordinance

2 Article XIX, § 297-324. Standards for specific types of signs.

3 *Code of Charles County, Maryland*

4 *(June, 2006)*

5
6 **§ 297-49. Word usage; definitions.**

7
8 **AGRICULTURAL TOURISM (AG TOURISM) -- AN AG TOURISM FACILITY IS AN**
9 **AGRICULTURAL RELATED BUSINESS LOCATED ON A FARM THAT IS OPEN**
10 **FOR CUSTOMERS AND TOURISTS FOR AT LEAST SIX (6) MONTHS OF THE**
11 **YEAR, FOR AT LEAST FOUR (4) DAYS A WEEK, AND WHICH PROVIDES TOURS**
12 **AND ON-SITE SALES OR SAMPLES OF PRIMARILY CHARLES COUNTY**
13 **AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.**

14
15 **§ 297-320. Signs requiring neither permit nor payment of a fee.**

16
17 The following signs are exempt from regulation under this article except for construction and
18 safety regulations and the following standards:

- 19
20 A. Political campaign signs. Political campaign signs are permitted in all zones. In residential
21 zones, political campaign signs shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and shall not be
22 illuminated. Political campaign signs shall be confined to private property and shall not be
23 affixed to any public structure.
- 24
25 B. Signs identifying the name of the property and/or residents thereon. Such signs shall not
26 exceed three (3) square feet in area.
- 27
28 C. Signs having an area of not more than eight square feet each, the message of which is
29 limited to warning of any danger, prohibition or regulation of the use of property or traffic
30 or parking thereon.

- 1 D. Signs erected by or on behalf of or pursuant to the authorization of a governmental body,
2 including legal notices, identification and information signs, and traffic, directional, **AG**
3 **TOURISM**, or regulatory signs.
4
- 5 E. The erection or maintenance of a sign designating the location of a transit line, a railroad
6 station or other public carrier when not more than three (3) square feet in area.
7
- 8 F. Temporary special decorative displays, without commercial advertising, used for holidays,
9 public demonstrations or the promotion of civic welfare or charitable purposes.
10
- 11 G. A sign identifying an approved automobile inspection station, in accordance with the
12 requirements of the State of Maryland Vehicle Administration, not exceeding sixteen (16)
13 square feet in area. Such sign shall contain no advertising of services or products at its
14 location.
15
- 16 H. Signs not exceeding four (4) square feet in area, securely attached to a gasoline pump,
17 stating the price and octane of gasoline at the service station.
18
- 19 I. Signs attached temporarily to the interior of a building window or glass door. Such signs,
20 individually or collectively, may not cover more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the
21 surface area of the transparent portion of the window or door to which they are attached.
22
- 23 J. A temporary sign without illumination, on-site, and not exceeding thirty-two (32) square
24 feet in area advertising the sale of farm livestock or farm products produced on the
25 premises.
26
- 27 K. Signs within an enclosed structure, and not visible from the exterior of the building.
28
- 29 L. Flags or insignia of any governmental or nonprofit organization when properly displayed.
30 This does not include company flags or pennant signs. Nonprofit flags may only be
31 displayed on the premises of the non-profit.

1
2 M. Signs directing and guiding traffic on private property that do not exceed four (4) square
3 feet each and that bear no commercial message.
4

5 **N. HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATION SIGNS STATING TIME AND PLACE OF**
6 **HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATION MEETINGS.**

7
8 **O. AG TOURISM SIGNS.**

- 9
10 (1) ANY AG TOURISM FARM THAT MEETS THE DEFINITION
11 CONTAINED IN THIS ORDINANCE IS ALLOWED UP TO THREE (3)
12 OFF-SITE DIRECTIONAL SIGNS TO DIRECT THE TRAVELING
13 MOTORIST TO THEIR FARM.
14
15 (2) THESE SIGNS WILL BE DESIGNED, CONSTRUCTED AND SIZED IN
16 ACCORDANCE WITH APPENDIX K OF THIS ORDINANCE.
17
18 (3) THESE SIGNS WILL BE LOCATED WITHIN THE ROAD RIGHT-OF-
19 WAY IN ACCORDANCE WITH APPENDIX K. WHERE IT IS NOT
20 POSSIBLE TO LOCATED THESE SIGNS IN THE ROAD RIGHT-OF-
21 WAY, SIGNS MAY BE PLACED ON PRIVATE PROPERTY WITH
22 PERMISSION OF THE PROPERTY OWNER.
23

24 **§ 297-321 Prohibited signs.**

25
26 A. The following signs or devices are prohibited:

- 27
28 (1) Signs which interfere with the view necessary for motorists to proceed safely
29 through intersections or to enter onto or exit from public streets or private roads.
30
31 (2) Signs which, by their location, color, size, shape, nature, or message may

1 obstruct the view of or be confused with official traffic signs or other signs
2 erected by governmental agencies.

3 (3) Signs that revolve or are animated or that utilize movement or apparent
4 movement to attract the attention of the public. This includes, but not limited
5 to, balloons, three-dimensional models, pennants, and propeller discs.

6 (4) Signs or devices, including searchlights, spotlights and holograms, which
7 contain or are illuminated by flashing, chasing, or intermittent effects. Scrolling
8 message boards may not change the message more than once every ten (10)
9 seconds. This provision shall not prohibit time, date, and/or temperature signs
10 that convey information by words, letter or numbers and which are not in
11 motion and are changed not more than once every ten (10) seconds.

12 (5) Off-premises signs other than directional signs for real estate sales and event
13 signs to include any sign mounted on wheels.

14
15 (6) Signs mounted to or painted on vehicles visible from the public right-of-way
16 unless the vehicle is used for transport in the normal day-to-day operations of
17 the business.

18
19 (7) Signs temporarily and or not securely mounted to vehicles. This does not
20 include magnetic business identification signs, vehicle graphics or wraps.

21
22 (8) Commercial advertising signs permanently placed or erected in the bed of a
23 truck or on the deck of a trailer or a truck.

24
25 (9) Roof signs.

26
27 (10) Signs that emit sound, vapor, smoke, odor, particles or gaseous matter.

28
29 (11) Signs within any government right-of-way except for official government signs,
30 signs authorized by the appropriate government authority or directional signs

erected in accordance with §297-325. Illegal signs erected in the government right-of-way may be removed by the county. **AN ADMINISTRATIVE FINE OF \$25 PER COMMERCIAL SIGN MAY BE ASSESSED BY THE COUNTY AGAINST THE PERSON THAT PLACES OR MAINTAINS A SIGN WITHIN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY OF THE STATE OR COUNTY.**

(12) Promotional/special sale signs posted on machinery or equipment.

§ 297-322. Signs requiring permit but no fee.

All signs in this section shall conform to the standards, provisions and regulations specified in this article. The following signs with their stated restrictions require a permit, but no fee:

- A. Home occupation. A non-illuminated sign not exceeding four (4) square feet in area, attached flat to a building, to advertise home occupations.
- B. Directional or information signs. The following directional or information signs of a public or quasi-public nature in any zone, not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet in area. Such signs shall be without illumination or advertising.
 - (1) Signs stating the name and/or location of a private school, college, YMCA, YWCA, fairgrounds, church or other place of worship or the name or place of meeting of an official or civic body as the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club or Kiwanis Club.

C. VILLAGE CENTER SIGNS. VILLAGE CENTERS MAY ERECT SIGN(S) BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- (1) **THE VILLAGE CENTER MUST BE DESIGNATED BY THE CHARLES COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN,**

1 (2) ONE SIGN MAY BE ERECTED AT EACH ENTRANCE OFF OF A
2 PRINCIPAL OR ARTERIAL ROAD TO THE VILLAGE CENTER,

3
4 (3) THE SIGN(S) SHALL

5
6 (A) BE MONUMENT SIGNS NO TALLER THAN 10 FEET AND
7 SHALL NOT EXCEED ONE HUNDRED TWENTY (120)
8 SQUARE FEET;

9
10 (B) NAME THE VILLAGE;

11
12 (C) NAME THE BUSINESSES LOCATED IN
13 THE VILLAGE CENTER, OR SHOW UNIVERSAL
14 HIGHWAY USE SYMBOL;

15
16 (D) NOT BE PERMITTED TO ADVERTISE PRODUCTS, SERVICES
17 OR SPECIALS.

18
19 (4) THE SIGN WILL BE DESIGNED IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING
20 MANNERS:

21
22 (A) HAVE NO MORE THAN SIX (6) TENANT PANELS WITH
23 THE MINIMUM SIZE OF INDIVIDUAL
24 CHARACTERS/GRAPHICS SHALL BE TEN (10) INCHES
25 IN HEIGHT AND ALL CHARACTERS/GRAPHICS SHALL
26 BE UNIFORM IN TYPE FONT AND COLOR SCHEME , OR

27
28 (B) HAVE A LED BOARD; OR

29
30 (C) HAVE A COMBINATION OF TENANT PANELS AND LED
31 BOARD; OR

1
2
3
4
5
6

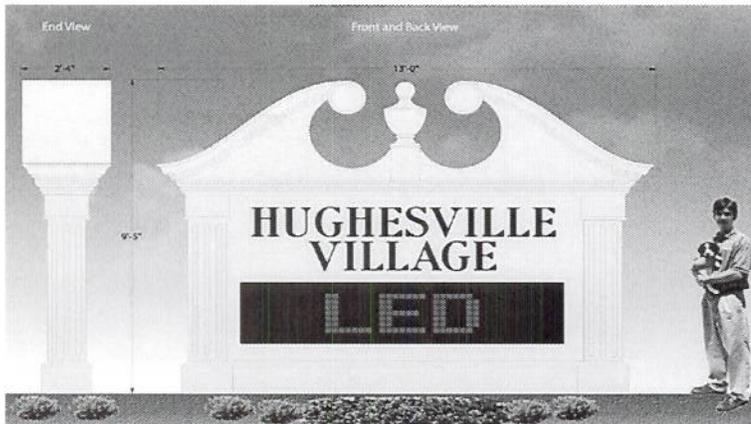
(D) HAVE ONLY THE UNIVERSAL HIGHWAY USE SYMBOLS.

(5) SIGN(S) ARE TO BE MAINTAINED AND OPERATED BY A VILLAGE CENTER ASSOCIATION.

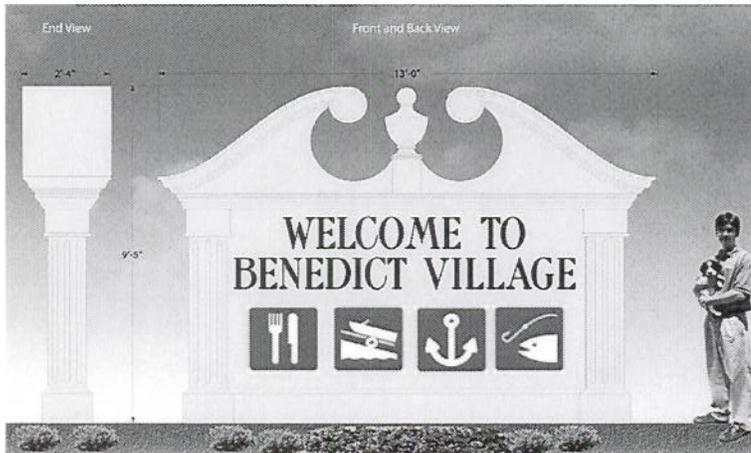
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Figure XIX-1
Maximum Sign Size and Height by Road Classification
Charles County, Maryland

Sign Type ²	Principal Arterial	Intermediate Arterial	Minor Arterial	Major Collector	Minor Collector or Local
Building Sign	1 square foot of sign per 50 square foot of gross floor area	1 square foot of sign per 50 square foot of gross floor area	1 square foot of sign per 75 square foot of gross floor area	1 square foot of sign per 75 square foot of gross floor area	1 square foot of sign per 100 square foot of gross floor area
"A" signs	6' square foot maximum sign size, 3' maximum height	6' square foot maximum sign size, 3' maximum height	6' square foot maximum sign size, 3' maximum height	6' square foot maximum sign size, 3' maximum height	6' square foot maximum sign size, 3' maximum height
Free Standing ¹ (types below)	Size and Height				
	1 square foot of sign per 100 square foot of gross floor area	1 square foot of sign per 100 square foot of gross floor area	1 square foot of sign per 125 square foot of gross floor area	1 square foot of sign per 125 square foot of gross floor area	1 square foot of sign per 150 square foot of gross floor area
-pole	25' maximum height	20' maximum height	12' maximum height	12' maximum height	12' maximum height
- pedestal/ monument	12' maximum height				

5
6
7
8

¹ Freestanding sign area shall not exceed 200 square feet, per sign.

² A MINIMUM GUARANTEED FREESTANDING SIGN AREA OR BUILDING SIGNAGE SHALL BE THIRTY-TWO (32) SQUARE FEET.

1 **§ 297-324. Standards for specific types of signs**

2
3 All signs in this section shall conform to the standards, provisions and regulations specified
4 in this article. The following signs with their stated restrictions require a permit and a fee:

5
6 A. Freestanding signs

7 (1) Number of signs allowed.

8
9 (a) Only one (1) freestanding sign shall be erected. A shopping center, business
10 park, or industrial park, may have one (1) freestanding sign. No
11 freestanding sign(s) shall be permitted for individual enterprises located
12 within or on the same lot with the shopping center, business park, or
13 industrial park.

14 (b) An additional freestanding sign may be erected on property with dual
15 frontage on state and/or county highways.

16
17 (2) Design/construction

18
19 (a) Freestanding signs shall be designed and constructed using materials so the
20 sign is architecturally consistent with the primary structure/building being
21 served by the sign.

22 (b) Freestanding signs shall be designed and constructed to ensure the support
23 structure is properly screened utilizing similar building materials as the
24 primary structure/building the sign is serving.

25
26 (3) Street address designations

27
28 (a) All freestanding signs shall include the street address designation, for
29 example: a sign serving an address for 5000 Crain Highway will have the
30 designation of “5000”.

1 (b) The street address designation shall be located so it is separate from the
2 main portion of the sign. The character size shall be a minimum of six (6)
3 inches in height and located at approximate eye level with standard
4 passenger vehicles.

5 (c) The total size of the address designation shall not exceed three (3) square
6 feet in area and will not count towards the maximum allowable sign area
7 permitted under this ordinance.
8

9 (4) Pole signs.

10
11 (a) The maximum height of a pole sign shall be determined by road
12 classification (see figure XIX-1).

13 (b) The maximum sign area shall be determined by road classification (see
14 figure XIX-1).

15
16 (5) Monument/pedestal signs

17
18 (a) The maximum height for a monument sign shall be determined by road
19 classification (see figure XIX-1).

20 (b) The maximum sign area shall be determined by road classification (see
21 figure XIX-1).

22
23 (6) Freestanding canopy signs

24
25 (a) A freestanding canopy with a company's name and/or logo must keep
26 signage flush with the surface with no projection off of the canopy.
27

28 (7) Tenant listing
29

- 1 (a) Tenant listings on freestanding signs shall be limited for use for retail or
2 shopping centers.
3
4 (b) The maximum number of tenants allowed on an individual exterior
5 freestanding sign shall be limited to six (6), including registered logos.
6
7 (c) The minimum size of individual characters/graphics on a tenant listing
8 shall be ten (10) inches in height and all characters/graphics shall be
9 uniform type font and color scheme.
10

11 **(8) CORPORATE/COMPANY FLAGS.**
12

13 (A) **THERE SHALL BE NO MORE THAN ONE (1)**
14 **CORPORATE/COMPANY FLAG ON ANY PARCEL.**

15
16 (B) **THE FLAG IS NOT TO EXCEED SIXTY (60) SQUARE**
17 **FEET IN SIZE.**

18
19 (C) **THE FLAG POLE IS NOT TO EXCEED FIFTY (50)**
20 **FEET IN HEIGHT.**
21

22 **(9) "A" SIGNS.**
23

24 (A) **THE MAXIMUM SIGN AREA FOR AN "A" SIGN SHALL BE**
25 **SIX (6) SQUARE FEET.**

26
27 (B) **THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT FOR AN "A" SIGN SHALL BE**
28 **THREE (3) FEET.**

29
30 (C) **THE MAXIMUM WIDTH FOR AN "A" SIGN SHALL BE**
31 **THREE (3) FEET.**

1 (D) MUST BE LOCATED ON THE SIDEWALK OR
2 DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF THE BUSINESS.
3

4 B. Signs attached to buildings.
5

6 (1) Flush façade sign.
7

8 (a) The maximum sign area shall be determined by road classification (see
9 figure XIX-1).
10

11 (b) [One sign shall be permitted for each customer entrance to the
12 building.] **BUILDINGS WITH MULTI TENANTS AND/OR**
13 **MULTI STORIES, ONE SIGN SHALL BE PERMITTED TO**
14 **NAME THE BUILDING. THOSE TENANTS WITH THEIR**
15 **BUSINESSES LOCATED ON THE GROUND LEVEL SHALL BE**
16 **PERMITTED ONE SIGN FOR EACH CUSTOMER ENTRANCE**
17 **FOR THEIR BUSINESS.**
18

19 (2) Projecting signs.
20

21 (a) The maximum sign area shall be determined by road classification (see
22 figure XIX-1).
23

24 (b) The minimum clearance from grade shall be eight (8) feet.
25

26 (c) The maximum projection from the building shall be determined by the
27 current building code.
28

29 (d) [One sign shall be permitted for each customer entrance to the
30 building.] **BUILDINGS WITH MULTI TENANTS AND/OR**
31 **MULTI STORIES, ONE SIGN SHALL BE PERMITTED TO**

1 (c) The flag pole is not to exceed fifty (50) feet in height.]

2
3 [(6) "A" signs.

4
5 (a) The maximum sign area for an "A" sign shall be six (6) feet.

6
7 (b) The maximum height for an "A" sign shall be three (3) feet.

8
9 (c) The maximum width for an "A" sign shall be three (3) feet.]

10
11 **§ 297-325 Event signs.**

- 12
13 A. Event signs related to events held in Charles County, located at public facilities,
14 including, but not limited to, county fairgrounds, parks and recreations, public schools,
15 and County owned properties, non-profit facilities (VFD, church, civic), events that
16 have obtained a temporary use permit for a public event, and church fundraisers. These
17 signs do not refer to grand openings, special sales or promotional sales.
- 18
19 B. A permit, with no fees, for event signs must be granted by the Zoning Officer at least
20 seven (7) days in advance of its public display.
- 21
22 C. Event signs may only be displayed fourteen (14) days in advance of the event.
- 23
24 D. Event signs shall be removed within forty-eight (48) hours after the end of the event.
- 25
26 E. With the exception of directional signs erected in accordance with §297-325, no event
27 signs shall be placed in the public rights-of-way or within the sight triangle of any
28 intersection. Event signs [made of wood] shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet.
29 Such signs must be placed on private property with owner's permission.
- 30
31 F. No paper or cardboard signs are permitted.

1 G. Directional signs for events signage located in county rights-of-way.

2
3 (1) The following standards apply to directional signs used to guide the motoring
4 public to events:

5
6 (a) Spacing: signs may be located at intersections, and may include straight as
7 well as turning movement arrows.

8
9 (b) Size: maximum of three (3) square feet.

10
11 (c) Location: three (3) feet off the curb or edge of paving; no more than thirty (30)
12 inches in height; in no case closer than thirty (30) feet to the point of
13 intersection.

14
15 (d) Duration: 12 noon Friday until 12 noon Monday or the Tuesday following a
16 Federal Holiday observed on a Monday. For a weekday event, the sign can be
17 placed forty-eight (48) hours in advance and removed twenty-four (24) hours
18 after the event.

19
20 (e) Number: no more than one (1) directional sign at each approach to the
21 intersection for each subdivision or development for which directions are being
22 given.

23
24 (f) Content: event name and a directional arrow must be part of the sign. The
25 name may include a description of the type of event.

26
27 (g) Materials: signs must be metal or plastic on a break-away support of wood,
28 plastic or flexible wire. No paper or cardboard signs are permitted.

29
30 (2) Sign location plan required: the permit application shall be accompanied by a sign
31 location plan drawn to scale of not less than one inch equals 2,000 feet. The plan

1 will show the location of the event and the number and general location of the
2 signs.

3
4 (3) Permit fees: the fees for directional signs shall be collected in the same manner as
5 temporary sign permits. The total square footage of signage shall be calculated by
6 adding the sum of all directional signs approved for an event.
7

8 **§ 297-326. Maintenance of signs and permits.**

9
10 A. All signs and all components thereof, including without limitation, supports, braces, and
11 anchors, shall be kept in a state of good repair **PER THE CHARLES COUNTY**
12 **BUILDING CODE, AS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME.**
13

14 **§ 297-328. Real estate signs.**

15
16 A. Notwithstanding the other restrictions contained within this sign Ordinance, the following
17 provisions only apply to real estate signs.
18

19 B. Signs requiring neither permit nor payment of a fee

20
21 (1) Real estate signs without illumination, containing the message that the real estate on
22 which the sign is located (including buildings) is for sale, lease, or rent together
23 with information identifying the owner or agent. Such signs shall be removed
24 within fourteen (14) days after sale, lease or rental.
25

26 (a) In residential zones, such signs may not exceed six (6) square feet in area and
27 shall be removed immediately after sale, lease, or rental. A single sign on each
28 street frontage may be erected.
29

30 (b) In all zones other than residential, such signs may not exceed thirty-two (32)
31 square feet in area.

1 (2) Off-premise signs announcing open houses for real estate sales **OR RENTALS**
2 shall be permitted provided that the owner's permission is obtained prior to the
3 posting of such sign, they are located outside of the public right-of-way, and the
4 sign is no larger than four (4) square feet. Such signs may be posted after 12:00
5 noon on Friday and must be removed by 12:00 p.m. the following Monday. No
6 more than four (4) signs shall be permitted for any one house.
7

8 C. Signs requiring permit but no fee.
9

10 (1) Permanent identification signs.
11

12 (a) A permanent single sign not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet in area,
13 identifying only the name and street number of an apartment house or complex,
14 or residential subdivision, may be erected on the premises or the building itself.

15 (b) To ensure that traveling motorists can see and identify the subdivision,
16 additional signage may be permitted not to exceed two signs with a total sign
17 area of not more than sixty-four (64) square feet.
18

19 D. Signs requiring permit and payment of a fee.
20

21 (1) Temporary identification sign. During development and sale of a subdivision or
22 other property, one (1) temporary sign naming the subdivision and other pertinent
23 sales information, having an area not exceeding sixty-four (64) square feet and a
24 height not exceeding sixteen (16) feet, shall be permitted in the subdivision or other
25 property. If the development has multiple street frontages with a vehicular
26 entrance, one (1) additional sign of equal size shall be allowed on the premises and
27 situated at the additional street frontage with a vehicular entrance.
28

29 (2) Temporary directional signs, indicating the location of a real estate subdivision.

30 (A) such signs, not exceeding a total of sixty-four (64) square feet in area, may be

1 erected within [six (6)] **EIGHT (8)** street miles of the subdivision site.

2 (B) A maximum of four (4) such signs are permitted, and each sign shall be located
3 not less than fifteen (15) feet from the nearest edge of a public right-of-way and
4 at least one hundred (100) feet from the nearest curb intersection of any streets
5 or roadways.

6
7 (C) The top of the sign shall not exceed 16 feet above grade.

8
9 (D) The content of such sign shall be restricted to the name of the subdivision and
10 other pertinent sales information.

11
12 (E) A temporary real estate sign shall be removed upon completion of the project or
13 when sold or leased.

14
15 (3) Directional signs for developing subdivisions located in county rights-of-way.

16
17 The following standards apply to directional signs used to guide the motoring public to
18 developing subdivisions:

19
20 (a) Spacing: signs may be located at intersections, and may include straight as well as,
21 turning movement arrows.

22
23 (b) Size: maximum of three (3) square feet.

24
25 (c) Location: three (3) feet off the curb or edge of paving; no more than thirty (30)
26 inches in height; in no case closer than thirty (30) feet to the point of intersection.

27
28 (d) Duration: 12 noon Friday until 12 noon Monday or the Tuesday following a federal
29 holiday observed on a Monday. For a weekday event, the sign can be placed forty-
30 eight (48) hours in advance and removed twenty-four (24) hours after the event.
31

1 (e) Number: no more than one (1) directional sign at each approach to the intersection
2 for each subdivision or development for which directions are being given.

3
4 (f) Content: subdivision or development name and a directional arrow must be part of
5 the sign. The name may include a description of the type of development.

6
7 (g) Materials: signs must be metal or plastic on a break-away support of wood, plastic
8 or flexible wire. No paper or cardboard signs are permitted.

9
10 (4) Sign location plan required: the permit application shall be accompanied by a sign
11 location plan drawn to scale of not less than one inch equals 2,000 feet. The plan will show
12 the location of the development and the number and general location of the signs.

13
14 (5) Permit fees: the fees for directional signs shall be collected in the same manner as
15 temporary sign permits. The total square footage of signage shall be calculated by adding
16 the sum of all directional signs approved for a single residential development.

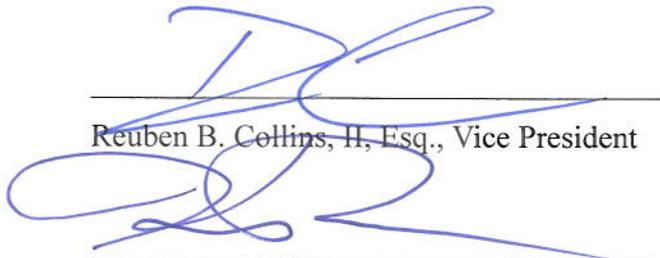
17
18 **Appendix K**

19
20 Incorporated herein.

1 **SECTION 2.** BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that this Act shall take effect TEN (10) calendar
2 days after it becomes law.

3
4 COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
5 CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND

6
7 
8 _____
9 Candice Quinn Kelley, President

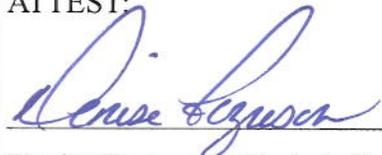
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11 
12 _____
13 Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., Vice President

14 Ken Robinson

15
16 
17 _____
18 Debra M. Davis, Esq.

19
20 
21 _____
22 Bobby Rucci

23 ATTEST:

24 
25 _____
26 Denise Ferguson, Clerk to the Commissioners
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APPENDIX K
Pilot Ag Tourism Sign Program

Forward

The County Commissioners approved a “Pilot Ag Tourism Sign Program” for Charles County to allow a period of time to develop a prototype sign, a proposed process and procedures for an Ag tourism sign program, install immediately several signs to evaluate the placement and effectiveness of the proposed signs and seek approval from the State Highway Commission to install these signs in their right of way. The pilot program will also allow Charles County to work with the Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission (SMADC) to pursue a standardized Ag tourism sign program for all of Southern Maryland. Eventually, it is hoped that an Ag tourism marketing program can be implemented using these signs to provide directions to the traveling motorists.

Charles County Department of Public Works
Standard Operating Policy and Procedure

Title:	Ag Tourism Sign Program	SOP #: DPW.
Division:	Roads	Effective Date:
		Revision Date:
		Page 1 of 3
Purpose:	To allow installation of agricultural tourism directional signs to qualifying agricultural businesses providing the facility meets all criteria set forth in Zoning Regulations and the criteria herein. The Agricultural Tourism Signage Program is a joint venture between Charles County Government and the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC). Signs shall be located and erected according to the standards of the <i>Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices</i> (MUTCD), the Charles County Road Ordinance and in compliance with federal and state laws and policies.	
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Charles County Zoning Ordinance * Charles County Road Ordinance * Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) 	
Policy:	An ag tourism facility is an agricultural business located on a farm that is open for customers and tourists for at least six (6) months of the year, for at least four (4) days a week, and which provides tours and on-site sales or samples of primarily Charles County and/or Maryland grown agricultural products. Sales must come from primarily farm products generated on the farm.	

Procedure:

CRITERIA

1. Any Ag Tourism farm that meets the definition contained in the Zoning Regulations is allowed up to three (3) off-site directional signs to direct the traveling motorist to their farm.
2. These signs will be designed, constructed and sized in accordance with Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
3. These signs will be generally located within the road right-of-way. Where it is not possible to locate these signs in the road right-of-way, signs may be placed on private property with permission of the property owner.
4. The owner of the business whose name appears on an agricultural tourism sign shall certify in writing that the business is in full compliance with all applicable Federal, State and local laws, rules and ordinances, including all applicable license and permit requirements.
5. All safety, sign spacing, and application criteria shall be satisfied.
6. Signs must be located at intersections.
7. The agricultural tourism facility shall be open for customers and tourists six (6) full months per year, and at least four days per week.
8. The agricultural tourism facility shall offer a tour to the public. The term tour is defined as an activity that is:
 - (a) Directed by a knowledgeable representative of the business.
 - (b) Educational, informative, and entertaining in nature.
 - (c) Of sufficient length to clearly describe the materials, equipment, and processes used in the production of agricultural products by the facility.
9. The agricultural tourism facility shall have a permanent sign posted in a prominent and visible location that states the name of the business with the days and hours of operation. The agriculture facility shall also have a permanent sign posted on the premises stating the times that tours are offered, or stating that tours are available upon request. The sign shall be posted in a conspicuous location that is visible to customers entering the facility.

	<p>10. The agricultural tourism facility shall provide on-site public restroom facilities and drinking water suitable for public consumption.</p> <p>11. The agricultural tourism facility shall offer samples and/or sales of Charles County agricultural products.</p> <p>12. The agricultural tourism facility shall be able to accommodate customers in a permanent, all weather structure, and have adequate on-site parking.</p> <p>13. The agricultural tourism facility shall maintain a web site with the hours of operation and directions to the facility, preferably including a map, posted. The hours of operation specified on the web site must meet minimum requirement.</p> <p>14. If the Department of Public Works determines that a sign replacement or modification is required, a new application may be required. At that time, the Facility will be required to meet all current program criteria and requirements.</p> <p>15. All manufacture and installation costs associated with the requested agricultural tourism signs will be at the expense of the requestor. The Department of Public Works will provide an estimated cost for the initial installation after approval of the application.</p> <p>16. A participating agricultural tourism facility that changes ownership shall provide written notice to the Department of Public Works within 30 days of the transfer of ownership. To retain signs, the new owner is required to submit a new application to the Department of Public Works. The facility is required to meet all current program criteria and requirements.</p> <p>17. Should a participating agricultural tourism facility cease to be in compliance with this policy and/or the criteria herein, the DPW shall notify the business applicant that it will be given 30 days to bring the facility into compliance or its agricultural tourism signs shall be removed. If the signs are removed and the facility later applies for reinstatement, the request will be handled in the same manner as a request by a new applicant. If it is determined that a facility is not in compliance twice within a two year period, its agricultural tourism signs shall be permanently removed.</p> <p>18. In the event that a facility is removed from the program, the DPW shall not be required to refund any program costs paid by the facility.</p>
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19. The DPW reserves the right to cover, relocate, or remove any agricultural tourism signs for maintenance or construction operations, or when deemed to be in the best interest of the DPW or the traveling public, without advance notice.

20. The DPW reserves the right to remove signs when roadway improvements or changes in the roadway cross section or configuration will no longer accommodate the existing signs. If existing signs no longer meet the DPW's size and design requirements for an upgraded roadway and existing signs are removed, the facility may request to upgrade their signs, provided that minimum spacing is available on the upgraded roadway and the facility meets all current program criteria and requirements. All upgrade costs shall be paid for by the facility. A new application will be required.

21. The DPW has the responsibility and authority to relocate or remove agricultural tourism signs if a need for a higher priority regulatory, warning, or guide sign is identified.

22. The DPW reserves the right to terminate this program or any Agreement for agricultural tourism signs, or any portion thereof, by furnishing the business written notice of such intent not less than 30 calendar days prior thereto.

APPLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

1. An agricultural facility seeking agricultural tourism signs or revisions to existing signs must complete an application form available from the DPW (Attachment A). The application form must be completed in its entirety.

2. The applicant shall include a map clearly depicting the requested sign location(s), the location of the agricultural facility, and the distance from each sign location to the facility. The distances can be handwritten on the map.

3. The agricultural facility must submit the application form with appropriate documentation to the Department of Public Works, 1001 Radio Station Road, La Plata, Maryland 20646.

4. The DPW will review the application, visit and inspect the agricultural facility, verifying facility accommodations, days and hours of operation, appropriate tours are offered, and that all other criteria are met. DPW will make a decision based on fulfillment of the program requirements.

5. If the agricultural facility is recommended for the Agricultural Tourism Signage Program, DPW will conduct a field investigation to verify that adequate spacing, right-of-way, and sight distance are available to safely install the signs. The DPW will prepare the cost estimate and agreement.

6. The DPW will administer the agreement, and after receiving payment, will manufacture and install the sign(s).

7. Any appeals to decisions shall be made in writing to the Director of Public Works.

EXCEPTIONS

Any and all exceptions to this policy/procedure must be approved in advance by the County Administrator.

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36"



72"



48"

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**Agricultural Tourism Signs
Application**

Date: _____

Name of
Business _____

Contact
Person _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

E-Mail
Address _____

Internet
Site _____

Requested Location of Sign(s)

1. Location of agricultural marketing facility

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2. What are the months, days, and hours you are open for sales to the public?

3. What percent of your total annual sales comes from Charles County-grown agricultural products? _____%

4. List the agricultural products sold to the public at this facility_____

5. List non-agricultural products sold at this facility_____

6. Do you provide tours for the public at this facility? ____ Yes ____ No

Note: To qualify for this program, the agricultural facility is required to conduct tours of the growing area, as well as any production area located on the farm or vineyard.

If your answer is No, you are not eligible for the Agricultural Tourism Signs program.

If yes, describe the type of tours, who directs the tours, and when the tours are provided.

7. Do you provide samples of your products? ____ Yes ____ No

List the types of samples:

1 8. Do you have a permanent sign near the roadway entrance to the premises with the
2 name of your business and the days and hours of operation? ___ Yes ___ No

3
4 9. Do you have a permanent sign near the front door of your facility that states the
5 times of scheduled tours, or that tours are available upon request (within thirty [30]
6 minutes of request)? Per program requirements, this sign shall be posted in a
7 conspicuous location that is visible to customers. ___ Yes ___ No

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9 10. Is this market operated in a permanent structure? ___ Yes ___ No

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11 11. Do you have restrooms available to the public? ___ Yes ___ No

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13 12. Do you have an on-site telephone available for emergency public use?
14 ___ Yes ___ No

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16 13. Do you have drinking water available for public consumption? ___ Yes ___ No

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18 14. List any local or state business licenses you are required to have to operate this
19 business.

20 _____
21 _____

22
23 15. What is the distance from this agricultural facility to the closest major highway
24 interchange? _____ miles

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26 16. Attach a map clearly depicting the requested sign locations(s) and the location of
27 the facility. The Department of Public Works will determine the acceptability of
28 requested sites

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30 **Attachment A**